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Interviewing Mair Verthuy

One notices first the warm blue eyes in an arresting face. Framed by smart over-sized glasses rimmed in startling white, they survey the scene with a swift intelligence and a flashing humour. Her gentle, husky voice, rich as the cream of her Celtic homeland seems to purr, until the listener begins to grasp the range and crispness of her broad, articulate mind. These are some first impressions of Mair (Polly) Verthuy, principal of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute.

Polly came to Concordia fourteen years ago, and in addition to her job with the Institute is associate professor of French at the university. In addition to that she is a wife, the mother of two grown daughters, tutor, friend, feminist, activist and worrier. She is also a dedicated fan of TV's *Mork* and *Mindy* without whom, she adds, and English detective novels, she couldn't survive!

Born in Wales, the youngest child and only daughter of parents who, though poor, were progressive for their day, she escaped the sexual stereotyping so familiar in North American culture. Her mother was a teacher who, once she married, was not allowed to continue her teaching. Her father was a miner once blacklisted for five years because of his political activities.

Encouraged by her family to reach for her greatest potential, she was educated both in Wales and in England. The scholarship system and competitive aspects of English grammar schools, she believes, aided her progress. She remembers feeling, along with her peers, as equal and as capable as men of attaining her goals. Though her schooling began during the decade of the 40's, she denies emphatically that the war had anything to do with the liberated quality of her life then. Her role models, she points out, were early feminists: teachers and writers. Many of them had fought for and obtained an education at Oxford in the days when that venerable institution allowed the education of women but refused them the credentials for it.

Oxford had only a few places open to



Illustration by Rachel Garber

women, however, and even fewer for applicants from the working class. It wasn't until she herself was denied admission there that Polly realized it was "...a male world out there."

After completing an honours degree in French and German at an all-women's college of London University, she moved on to law school. Her voice grows wistful as she tells how her dream of becoming a barrister and perhaps one day a member of Parliament faded when she married and went to live in France.

Arriving in Canada in 1959 with her husband and two small daughters, she came first to Chatham, Ontario where she had a teaching position. She had been brought up with the denials of race and class, but here she discovered another kind of oppression. "The people were super—warm, helpful and welcoming," she says, "but there was this horrifying conformity. It was the era of the seven petticoats. I had never seen this phenomenon in the flesh before. The kids could hardly walk between the seats because of those damned petticoats. I was stunned!" Contrasting this with her own youthful struggles with oppression, she mused, "I have a lot of anger, but I can never have the same kind of anger as the woman who has had to get rid of those frilly petticoats!"

Discussing the Institute, Polly was thoughtful. The goals of the Institute will be

defined by the people in it, she feels, and will always change. She sees this first year as a time when things are shaking down, and unexpected issues arise. For the moment, an important priority for her is that the internal workings of the Institute be positive, not necessarily efficient.

She emphasizes her conviction that the Institute must be a place where all modes of feminism will be comfortable. It is a place, in her view, which does not favour one mode or another. Anxious that isolated and traditional women should all feel at home here, she urges them to come and speak up.

"We don't have sufficient confidence in ourselves," she observes, "to be able to function without some clumsiness, and we make mistakes." She worries that the clumsiness may sometimes undermine trust, but "...members are getting leadership training in the Institute these days, and both students and faculty are un-learning hierarchical patterns..."

"I hope we'll be able collectively to devise ways and means of maintaining our democratic structures within the hierarchical structures of the university," she says. "It has to be worked out in practice. The first year is probably the hardest from that point of view. We're also in the process of building trust in each other. I think we must succeed, but on our own terms—be satisfied with what we've learned." continued on page 2

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She wonders how she and the older (laughingly designating those over twenty-five as "older") members of the Institute in positions of responsibility are perceived. "We have different personalities, we're all strong in different ways. I think what we have to show the younger members is that we have our weaknesses, too." When pressed to talk about her own weaknesses, she is quick to declare, "I worry too much about things, and tend to be too maternal about the Institute. Like most mothers, I find it hard to let go..."

A question early in the interview had been, "How did you come to women's studies?" The answer is, of course, that she has always been there. "It was taken for granted," she says of her all-girl grammar school days, "that we played team sports, that we were good in science, that we were naturally intelligent, and that we could naturally do anything." And there she is, doing it as she knows it can be done, naturally.

Marion Patterson

Ce sont d'abord les yeux bleus qui attirent notre attention; les yeux animés de cette femme qui porte des lunettes élégantes aux montures blanches. Son regard vif est captivant. Sa voix alto est douce; par sa chaleur elle nous rappelle son pays natal celtique. On s'aperçoit vite de l'étendue et de la vivacité de son intelligence. Volà quelques-unes des premières impressions que laisse Mair Verthuy, directrice de l'Institut Simone de Beauvoir.

Mair est arrivée à l'université Concordia il ya a quatorze ans. Elle est directrice de l'Institut et professeur agrégé au département d'études françaises. En plus, elle est épouse, mère de deux filles adultes, conseillère, amie, féministe, activiste. C'est une admiratrice de l'émission de télévision *Mork and Mindy* et une fervente des romans policiers anglais; elle ne pourrait vivre sans eux!

Née au Pays de Galles, cadette et la seule fille de parents qui, quoi que pauvres, étaient très progressistes pour l'époque, elle a échappé aux stéréotypes sexuels si courants en Amérique du Nord. Sa mère, institutrice jusqu'à son mariage, a 'chômé' ensuite, la loi de l'époque interdisant aux femmes mariées d'exercer cette profession. Son père travaillait comme mineur et s'est trouvé pendant cinq ans sur la liste noire à cause de ses activités politiques.

Encouragée par sa famille à développer son plein potentiel, elle a reçu son éducation au Pays de Galles et en Angleterre. Elle croit que le système de bourses et l'aspect compétitif des collèges britanniques ont aidé son progrès intellectuel. Elle se souvient qu'elle, ainsi que ses pairs, se sentaient égales aux garçons et aussi capables qu'eux d'atteindre leurs buts. Quoi qu'elle ait commencé ses études pendant les années 40, elle nie for-

mellement que la guerre ait été responsable de ses idées sur la libération des femmes. Ses modèles, professeurs et écrivaines, figuraient parmi les premières féministes. Plusieurs d'entre elles avaient lutté pour être admises à l'université Oxford à l'époque où cette vénérable institution acceptaient quelques femmes mais leur refusait leurs diplômes.

Quand Mair était prête à poursuivre ses études universitaires, il n'y avait que quelques places ouvertes aux femmes à Oxford, et encore moins aux candidat/e/s de la classe ouvrière. Ce n'est que quand elle a été refusée que Mair s'est rendue compte que le monde réel était "...un monde au masculin."

Après avoir terminé son programme "honneurs" en français et en allemand à un collège de femmes à l'université de Londres, elle a commencé ses études en droit. Mais son rêve de faire de la politique est tombé à l'eau quand elle épousa un beau grand Français et qu'elle est allée vivre en France.

Lorsqu'elle est arrivée au Canada avec son mari et ses deux petites filles en 1959, elle a d'abord habité Chatham, Ontario où elle enseigna. Elle a dû lutter contre les injustices de classe et de race/nationalité pendant sa jeunesse, mais ici elle a découvert une autre forme d'oppression. "Les gens étaient extra-ordinaires, chaleureux, serviables, accueillants," dit-elle, "mais il y avait cette horrible conformité. C'était l'époque des sept jupons. Je n'avais jamais rencontré ce phénomène auparavant. Les enfants pouvaient à peine passer entre les bancs à cause de ces jupons ridicules. J'en étais stupéfiée. Comparant cette expérience avec les luttes de sa propre jeunesse contre l'oppression, elle dit: "Je ressens beaucoup de colère, mais je ne peux jamais ressentir la même colère que la femme qui avait à se débarrasser de ces jupons ruchés."

Mair est réfléchie lorsqu'elle parle de l'Institut. Les buts de l'Institut seront définis par les membres de l'Institut, et changeront continuellement. Elle voit cette première année comme un temps où les structures se mettent en place et où des questions inattendues surviennent. Pour le moment, il lui importe que le fonctionnement interne de l'Institut soit positif, pas nécessairement efficace.

Elle accentue sa conviction que l'Institut doit être un lieu où tous les modes de féminisme peuvent fleurir. C'est un lieu,

qui ne favorise aucune tendance particulière. Elle désire que les femmes isolées et traditionnelles se sentent à l'aise ici et elle les invite à venir prendre la parole.

"Nous n'avons pas suffisamment confiance en nous-même," note-t-elle, "pour être capables de fonctionner sans quelques maladresses et il nous arrive de commettre des erreurs." Elle a peur que la maladresse puisse parfois miner la confiance des membres, mais "...celles et ceux-ci pratiquent aujourd'hui l'apprentissage du 'leadership' et, les étudiants comme les professeurs désapprennent les modèles hiérarchiques..."

"J'espère que nous pourrions inventer ensemble des façons et des moyens de maintenir nos structures démocratiques à l'intérieur des structures hiérarchiques de l'université. Cela doit se faire dans la pratique. La première année est probablement la plus difficile de ce point de vue. Nous sommes aussi en train d'apprendre à nous faire confiance mutuellement. Je crois que nous devons réussir, mais à nos propres conditions — être satisfait/e/s de ce que nous avons appris."

Elle se demande comment celles et ceux qui occupent des postes de responsabilité sont vu/e/s, c'est-à-dire elle-même et les membres plus âgé/e/s, celles et ceux qui ont plus de vingt-cinq ans, ajoute-t-elle en souriant. "Nous avons des personnalités différentes et nous sommes tou/s/tes fort/e/s de différentes façons. Je crois que nous devons montrer aux moins âgé/e/s que nous avons aussi nos faiblesses." Lorsqu'on lui demande de parler de ses propres faiblesses, elle nous répond sans hésitation: "Je me fais trop de soucis et j'ai tendance à être une mère poule vis-à-vis l'Institut. Comme la plupart des mères, j'ai de la difficulté à lâcher les rênes..."

Voici une des premières questions de l'interview: Comment en êtes-vous arrivée aux études de la femme? La réponse est, bien sûr, qu'elle y a toujours été. "Il allait de soi," dit-elle parlant de son collège classique féminin, que nous participions aux sports d'équipe, que nous étions fortes en sciences, que nous étions naturellement intelligentes et que, naturellement, nous pouvions tout faire." Et voilà Mair Verthuy, en train de faire, naturellement, ce qu'elle sait bien faire.

trad.: M. Sullivan

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We've all heard it... that rhetorical question posed in a slightly skeptical tone: "Whatever happened to the women of the '60's?" Ill-wishers like to imply that it was all a tempest in a tea-pot, that its essence lay in that infamous "bra burning" created by the media. There is no question that some of the sensationalism has left the periphery of feminist activities. This is hardly a loss to those women who have remained serious and dedicated over the years; nor is it a loss to those who later joined forces with the "women of the '60's." There was a great sense of discovery then in uncovering the sexist underbelly of our society; people are still making this discovery now. Many of us who experienced that excitement which has too often been blithely passed over as "only consciousness raising" have now moved to another phase. We are now working to create viable alternatives for feminists of both sexes in our society.

The Simone de Beauvoir Institute is one such alternative within the context of a big-city university. We have grown from a Women's Studies programme begun in our university in the late '60's. This newsletter is our way of sharing our experience with people beyond our close circle. It is also a way of allowing people within the Institute to keep up with events. For this reason, it

might sometimes read like a family conversation. We hope to make certain features constant in the Newsletter: an interview in each issue; articles about our philosophy, about Women's Studies and Women's Culture, reports on current writing and research pertaining to women. We will also list events taking place in the Institute and, when asked, in other places as well. We hope that you, our readers, will submit notices and/or short articles which you judge to be of interest to our readership. We anticipate a large readership across Canada and in other countries. Many of our members, as well as those who have expressed interest in us, are francophones. We shall therefore print articles as they are submitted in either French or English, usually providing a translation or a précis of an article in the other language.

It's not that we're that special at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute. Rather, we feel we share many of the preoccupations, problems and glories of women everywhere. It has been our good fortune to have this opportunity to set up an Institute with the support of our University. Our greatest asset, though, is in the variety

of our membership. We hope that this publication will convey to you, members and non-members alike, a sense of the energy and diversity available here. We look forward to your participation, to your

sharing of news either from within the Institute or without. We will on our part try our best to keep the information and sense of community flowing.

Greta Nemiroff

"Où sont les femmes des années 60?"

Nous l'avons toutes entendue cette question posée pompeusement sur un ton quelque peu sceptique. Et l'on évoque le rituel honteusement célèbre, créé de toute pièce par les journaux, où les femmes brûlaient leur soutien-gorge en symbole de leur libération. Pour nos ennemis, tout cela n'était qu'une tempête dans un verre d'eau. Il ne fait pas de doute que les activités féministes ont perdu quelque peu du "sensational" qui prévalait à leurs débuts. Les femmes qui sont restées sérieuses et dévouées à la Cause et qui se sont ralliées à leurs consœurs des années 60, n'y voient pas une grande perte. On avait le sentiment, à l'époque, d'avoir découvert un monde nouveau lorsqu'a été démasqué le sexisme qui sous-tend la société et nombreux sont ceux qui font encore une telle découverte. Cependant, celles d'entre nous qui avons fait l'expérience de cette émotion, trop souvent tenue pour une simple prise de conscience, sommes maintenant passées au stade suivant. A présent, nous oeuvrons à la création de choix valables pour les féministes des deux sexes dans notre société.

L'Institut Simone de Beauvoir est l'exemple d'un tel choix au sein d'une grande université. Nous avons évolué du programme de "Women's Studies" institué à l'université vers la fin des années 60. Ce bulletin a pour but de faire partager notre expérience aux gens qui sont hors de notre entourage immédiat et de permettre aux

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Madame Mair E. Verthuy
Directrice
Institut Simone de Beauvoir
Université Concordia
1455, boulevard Maisonneuve
Montréal, P.Q. H3G 1M8
CANADA

Paris,
le 24 novembre 1978

Madame,

Mon amie Madeleine Gobeil m'a fait part de votre lettre du 24 octobre. Je suis heureuse d'apprendre l'existence de l'Institut Simone de Beauvoir de l'Université Concordia (en version anglaise: The Simone de Beauvoir Institute of Concordia University).

J'ai pris connaissance avec beaucoup d'intérêt de vos divers cours et projets.

Acceptez, je vous prie, Madame, l'expression de mes vœux les meilleurs pour le succès de votre entreprise.

S de Beauvoir
Simone de Beauvoir

Monsieur le Recteur et Vice-Chancelier
Université Concordia
1455 ouest, Boulevard Maisonneuve
Montréal, P.Q. H3G 1M8
CANADA

Paris,
le 24 novembre 1978

Monsieur,

Je suis heureuse d'apprendre que l'Université Concordia de Montréal a choisi de donner mon nom à son nouvel Institut des Etudes de la Femme. Je souhaite à l'Institut et à sa Directrice Madame Mair Verthuy, aux membres-étudiants et au personnel enseignant et professionnel beaucoup de succès pour la réussite de cette entreprise.

Acceptez, Monsieur le Recteur, l'expression de mes sentiments les meilleurs.

S de Beauvoir
Simone de Beauvoir

Shared Responsibility, Our Structures

L'organisation de l'Institut Simone-de-Beauvoir se doit, à notre avis, de refléter la réalité et l'idéal des expériences vécues par les femmes, et reconnaître avant tout l'égalité de tous ses membres. C'est pourquoi l'Assemblée générale est l'autorité ultime de l'Institut. Elle réunit tous les membres de l'Institut et elle est convoquée quatre fois par année. En outre, différents groupes et personnes travaillent au bon fonctionnement de l'Institut: 1) un Conseil d'administration composé de professeurs, d'étudiants et d'autres employés de l'Université (personnel professionnel, technique et de secrétariat). Ce conseil, formé de seize membres, est responsable auprès de l'Assemblée générale et formule les politiques générales de l'Institut; 2) trois responsables de l'Institut et douze professeurs assurent la bonne marche de l'Institut et s'occupent particulièrement du climat et des activités d'apprentissage de l'Institut; 3) six Comités formés de volontaires (programme, climat, budget/priorités, embauche).

When the small committee charged with drafting structures for the Women's Studies Institute began to meet, it was very aware of the negative model provided by the university and most of its structural units. Traditionally, these structural units have been described as 'committees', 'departments', 'councils' and 'senates', a description which seems to imply democracy, participation and common responsibility. In reality, in most universities, the power and information necessary to act responsibly has remained centralized in a few individuals, usually former full-time faculty who have become full-time administrators.

This type of structure seemed particularly unsuitable for a Women's Studies Institute. The Institute, we felt, needed structures which would better reflect the reality and the ideal of women's experience, and which would, above all, give equal recognition to all members. This over-riding principle of equal recognition is particularly relevant to the study and lives of women. The full recognition of 'part-time' students and faculty, never achieved before within the paternalistic and hierarchical structures of the university, would reflect the fact that many women, because of their life situation, wish to study or teach only part-time, while others, who might want to teach full-time, cannot find full-time teaching positions. Equal recognition of staff members, such as counsellors, para-academic program developers, health service personnel, librarians, secretarial and clerical workers, would provide such persons with opportunities for participation generally denied to them in the mainstream of

university life.

Equal recognition implied openness and accountability in decision-making. Traditionally, faculty have had much ascribed power in the area of curriculum, but their role has often been hampered by lack of information or power in other areas, particularly budget, priorities, and hiring. Furthermore, work in areas which directly affect people's lives, such as curriculum and personnel, has often meant more status and reward than work which has more indirect effects. We wanted to create structures that would generate an atmosphere in which information and opinion flowed freely. At the same time, we were concerned that those structures be flexible enough to accommodate the skills and interests of individual members, while encouraging them to develop their potential for leadership and problem-solving.

It should not come as a surprise, then, given these goals, that the basic governing structure chosen was the Institute Assembly, composed simply of all Institute members. Institute members must attend at least half of Assembly meetings, held about four times a year. In this truly representative and open forum, the work of standing committees is reviewed, and every member has an opportunity to make recommendations.

Each of the six standing committees—Curriculum, Priorities and Budget, Educational Climate, Personnel, Membership and Liaison, and Material Resources, is composed of up to ten members. Only in the case of the Personnel Committee (mandated to review Institute officers, tutors and support staff) is the membership elected by the Assembly and the composition specified to represent equally students, faculty and staff. The other committees are formed by interested members who volunteer to serve. Each standing committee establishes and implements its own mandate, and also elects one of its members to the Institute Council.

The 16-person Council includes, besides the six members elected by the standing committees, 7 members elected directly by the Assembly, and the three Institute Officers. The Council formulates Institute policy at regular open meetings and is accountable to the Assembly for all its decisions.

The Institute Officers are a Principal and two Associate Principals, one from each campus. Each Officer is a full-time faculty member, teaching at least one full course.

Tutors are full- or part-time faculty, and occasionally staff, who are teaching courses or otherwise involved in work related to Women's Studies. Each of the 12 tutors is responsible for giving assistance to specifically assigned students and for making some further commitment to the life and work of the Institute.

It is to be hoped that these structures will present a model for decision-making which will encourage individuals to balance their responsibility to themselves and their responsibility to a community: what Doris

Lessing has called "the individual conscience in relationship to the collective."

The structures, now actually in place, are just emerging from their initial and time-consuming phase where a) they must set themselves up and b) take care of "current" business and c) begin long-term planning. It's rather like, in one and the same week, moving household, running the household on a regular schedule, and beginning work on a new extension. One problem we still face is how we are perceived. Both within our own membership and in the university community there is a tendency to accord more 'equal recognition' to the Principal than to other Institute officers and members.

We are counting on time, patience, and the inspiration and example of such concerned women as George Eliot, Simone de Beauvoir, Nellie McClung, Thérèse Casgrain, Madeleine Parent, Dorothy Livesay and Margaret Atwood to reinforce an ideal of collective effort against the temptations and enchantments of hierarchy. Our structures are 'people' structures: they're designed to let people be and become themselves, with one another's help. The more who share, the more there is to share.

Kathy Waters

What Happens at the Institute

Au cours du premier semestre, les étudiants, les vingt-six professeurs et autres membres de l'Institut ont organisé un grand nombre d'activités ouvertes à toute l'Université et au grand public: discussions du jeudi (SGW) et du vendredi (Loyola), causeries à bâtons rompus du mercredi soir et série de débats "Dialogues en profondeur". Dans cette dernière catégorie, on a présenté entre autres "La femme sorcière" et "Romantisme: machination ou exaltation".

The Simone de Beauvoir Institute has spawned, sponsored or inspired an impressive and varied list of groups, events and activities. It is hard to believe that such a quantity of energy and vigour has come from a membership of just about one hundred students and twenty-six faculty and staff, and, of course, it hasn't. Most events have also attracted many non-members, both from Concordia and from the community at large.

Regular features are the Brown Bag lunches on Thursdays (SGW) and Fridays (Loyola), La Jasette du mercredi soir (SGW), and the Dialogues in Depth series. The Brown Bag lunches and the Jasette are held once a week. Typically there is a presentation followed by a discussion; topics, announced a week or two ahead, reflect the personal interest of the person giving the presentation, and have included Henrik Ibsen's *Women*, the Powerhouse Gallery, and *De la femme Algérienne*. At

Loyola they are held at Terrebonne House, while at Sir George the congenial Bishop Street Lounge is used, where the new wall-to-wall carpet ensures seating space for well over fifty people.

A panel discussion format is followed for the Dialogues in Depth. All the Dialogues are moderated by Audrey Bruné of the English Department, who presided at "Ambivalent Fires: Woman as Witch" appropriately attired in black peak hat, equipped with broomstick and related paraphernalia. This series exploits the talents of some of the most flamboyant and articulate of Concordia's faculty members; for the titles and stars of future Dialogues, see the Coming Events section.

Another successful venture in the fall program was Women in the Arts, held at the Loyola campus, and featuring talks by Colleen Curran, playwright, and Shirley Raphael, graphic artist, as well as a performance by the musical group, Pierce Street.

Institute members do not just sit around chewing the fat, however, although la parole de femmes is unquestionably a priority. Members have organized to pursue such activities as volunteer work at the Centre Refuge de Montréal, self-defence classes, and a creative writing group focused on "growing up female". There is a workshop for working women, the beginnings of a women's choir, and a group interested in studies of the menstrual cycle. Men are welcome in most activities, and to date 10 men have become members of the Institute.

In a more festive and celebratory vein, a wine and cheese party was held at Terrebonne House following the General Assembly on November 28th, and a house-warming party rocked the Bishop Street house until the wee hours Saturday December 9th. It is to be hoped that these are but the first in a long and successful series of similar events!

Women's Studies: The Introduction

Identité et image de la femme: attitudes historiques et points de vue contemporains. Seul cours obligatoire pour tous les nouveaux étudiants de l'Institut, il est dispensé par deux professeurs de formation différente et porte sur six thèmes principaux de la femme archétype: la Tentatrice, la Déesse vierge, la Mère, la Femme-objet, la Femme-génie et l'Activiste. Dans ce cours, on tentera de donner à l'étudiant les moyens d'intégrer son expérience personnelle à la matière enseignée.

There is only one course (or pair of half-courses) required of all new student members in the Simone de Beauvoir Institute: **Woman's Identity and Image: Historic Attitudes and Contemporary Approaches.** Enrolment in this course,

FRIENDS

Due to considerable interest expressed by members of the general public, a special category of membership has been created by the Simone de Beauvoir Institute, that of a Friend of the Institute. Friends of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute will: receive complimentary copies of the **Newsletter**; be welcome to participate in cultural events and to initiate such activities within the Institute. Annually a list of names of our Friends will be published in the **Newsletter** and there will be receptions for them as well.

Dues for friends are:

Students: \$10.00 per annum

Non-students: \$15.00 per annum

For further information, please contact Professor Sheila McDonough, Associate Principal, Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Concordia University, 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd., W., Montreal, Que.

given through the centre for interdisciplinary studies, will be a condition of membership in the institute. It is given on both of our campuses: at Loyola during the day and Sir George in the evening. The two sections of the course are given by different people and the clientèle differs as well. The Loyola course, given for the first time this year, has approximately thirty students while down-town there are about one hundred. This account will focus on the down-town course which was first offered in 1970 and has steadily grown and developed ever since. Two of our tutors, Christine Allen and myself, have been developing it since we introduced it to the university eight years ago. At that time, there was less literature on or by women available than there is now. We ourselves had been trained in different disciplines (Philosophy, Fine Arts and English) whose perspectives we could bring to the study of women. From our different points of view we were able to pool diverse knowledge and variegated reading on the subject of women. It has been our good fortune to grow with this new and ever-expanding field of study over the years we have been offering the course.

The body of the course has been schematized through a methodology called "conceptual or archetypal history" which pulls together material from several disciplines as they apply to different images, concepts, or archetypes of woman. Through our schematization, we can offer to our students some conceptual tools with which to organize their thoughts and feelings on the very complex and value-laden subject of women. Archetypal analysis lends itself to an inter-disciplinary approach because it must draw upon material from eclectic sources to substantiate its claims.

AMIS

A cause de l'intérêt considérable porté par le grand public, l'Institut Simone-de-Beauvoir a décidé de créer une catégorie spéciale de membres: les Amis de l'Institut. Ceux-ci recevront gracieusement le **Bulletin** de l'Institut, pourront participer aux activités culturelles ou même en susciter. Tous les ans, une liste de nos membres sera publiée dans le **Bulletin** et des activités spéciales seront organisées à leur intention.

Cotisation: étudiants: \$10.00 par année
autres: \$15.00 par année

Pour tous renseignements, s'adresser au professeur Sheila McDonough, Principal-adjoint, Institut Simone-de-Beauvoir, Université Concordia, 1455 blvd. de Maisonneuve O., Montréal, Québec.

The first weeks of the course are spent examining various basic theories of the archetype. We then move on to consider six central themes: Woman as Evil Temp-tress; Woman as Virgin Goddess, Woman as Earth Mother, Woman as Passive Object, Woman as Genius and finally Woman as Political Activist. In each case we trace the historical roots of the archetype and examine its contemporary manifestations from many points of view. We focus on Western civilization although students who wish to are encouraged to explore other cultures in their own research work.

However, the course embodies a great deal more than its extensive reading list and lecture material. We are continuously made aware that the subject matter itself touches a responsive chord in each of our students. It is always very close to their own experience, be they male or female. One of our objectives, then, is to help them to bring together their own experience and feelings with the reding matter of the course. We want to facilitate the surfacing of those deeply held ideas and expectations regarding the nature of woman. We also want to help our students develop an intellectual framework through which they may organize and comprehend their own experience. While it is essential to get in touch with one's own feelings, it is equally important to comprehend that many of our feelings and attitudes stem from social and historical determinants over which we have little control. To what extent, we ask our students to consider, is each of us able to reshape such deeply rooted ideas?

There are various ways in which we work towards this ambitious goal. The first is by our combined presence; we both attend each lecture and often engage in

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debate with one another or stimulate discussion and debate in the class. At the beginning of each semester each student is asked to submit a personal profile in writing. In this profile, students account for themselves, they present to us what they wish us to know about them and their choice of this course. We also submit profiles of ourselves to them. Their profiles are returned to the students with both of our comments and assorted marginalia as a response. These submissions give us, the teachers, much important data. They tell us what our students' concerns are and what kind of anecdotal or illustrative material will be most effective with them. Consciously and unconsciously we are now more likely to bend some of our class time to the interests which have surfaced from one hundred strangers in an amphitheatre. At the end of the term, students also submit written evaluations of themselves, us and the course. These evaluations often give very worthwhile criticism and suggestions for improvement as well as support. In addition, students are given the option of attending weekly conference groups given by former students from this course whose academic preparation and ability to interact effectively in groups qualify them as conference leaders. Run on an open agenda, these conferences are forums in which the students can discuss the concerns they experience in relation to ideas or experiences arising from the course. They are encouraged here to integrate their reading with their own experience and to give one another much needed support and confrontation.

Each term students must design a term project for themselves. The criteria for these projects is that they be relevant both to the course and the students' own lives. Proposals are submitted, commented on by the teachers, and returned to the students. We might ask the students to redefine their objectives, or we may suggest additional reading and resources. The projects appear in many media and are often of extraordinary quality. We have received interesting graphics on subjects ranging from the Earth Mother to Woman as Genius; sculptures of the Jungian animus and anima, macramé earth mothers of stunning quality; a paper on the history of weaving accompanied by a specimen of weaving; extra-ordinary quilts...one depicting the history of women in Québec society. There have been dramatic presentations on video-tape, film and live: scenes from *Hedda Gabler* or a Greek tragedy on the decline of the matriarchy written and acted by two students. Research papers cover multitudes of subjects from Rosa Bonheur to Rosa Luxembourg. Often social science students will group together and conduct complex surveys with interesting conclusions. We ourselves are constantly learning from our students' work and encourage them to share their knowledge with each other. The course ends with a

take-home exam based on the assigned readings. This somewhat exigent assignment not only tests their understanding of the texts and main concepts in the course, but it also provides the students with the opportunity to integrate and sum up their thoughts.

The reason this course is considered to be the most appropriate introduction to the Women's Studies programme at Concordia is because of its inter-disciplinary nature. One of its functions is to introduce students to topics which they might want to pursue in other course offerings of the programme. Thus, some one who wants to learn more about the biological and physiological determinants of sex identity will see value in pursuing such knowledge in a Psychology course entitled, "Sexual Differentiation". Students who have been interested in the many literary examples used in the course may continue in Literature courses devoted to women...and covering various historical periods. We see this course, then, acting as catalyst into the disciplines where certain subjects will be given a more thorough and exacting examination.

Per se, inter-disciplinarity has many other advantages which we try to explore in the course. Some of the benefits which accrue from an introductory inter-disciplinary course in Women's Studies are: 1) it provokes identification in the student. By the variety of disciplines touched upon, it is likely to inspire in each student the curiosity to pursue some topic of both scholarly and self-referred interest; 2) it exposes students to classical works, to newly excavated readings and to contemporary thought on important aspects of women's experience - regardless of disciplinary boundaries. 3) By applying works in various disciplines to one phenomenon, students are exposed to the complexity of intellectual inquiry as well as both the inter-relatedness and divergence of the disciplines; 4) it gives women students a sense of community and an eclectic intellectual framework through which they can conceptualize their own experiences; and 5) it provides for men a new way of looking at women and thus at themselves.

Through the feedback of our evaluations as well as the contacts we have maintained with past students, we find that this course has had a powerful impact on their lives. Often the impact relates to a very personal choice, but as frequently it might effect the students' experience in the work place. Elementary and secondary school teachers have reassessed and revised their curriculum. Many women have been encouraged to seek positions on their union's, executives or more responsible positions in office jobs. Above all, what keeps us going is the continuous evidence of those students who have attended to de Beauvoir when she exhorts her readers to take charge of our own lives, to "act in good faith."

Greta Nemiroff

Women's Studies Update

The Women's Studies programme at Concordia is constantly evolving to meet the challenges of its many students. Its academic base is separate from the Simone de Beauvoir Institute and housed in the Centre for Inter-disciplinary Studies. This division of the University sponsors problem-oriented studies taught by a wide range of professors utilizing interdisciplinary methods which go beyond the sometimes narrow range of departmental boundaries.

Women's Studies at Concordia is an exciting cluster of courses. Exploring female identity, history and change through almost every discipline in the Arts and Science faculty, the programme offers an introductory course and last-year seminar to synthesize its multiple academic range. There are over 100 students in the Introductory courses. Young students, mature students, aspiring artists, inquiring economists, men and women, French and English, grandmothers and grandchildren—they come from every corner of the city and many countries of the world.

With four full courses or 24 credits, students enrich their major subjects with a minor in Women's Studies. There are presently 40 students in the minor programme. Courses can emphasize either a social science, humanities or pure science concentration.

In 1979-1980, the programme is expanding. The University Senate has passed a major in Women's Studies which can be acquired for 36 credits or 6 full courses. Five students have already enrolled and 3 of these will be graduating in September 1979. The major provides academic training and professional orientation on women in society. It is an excellent choice for those students planning a career in this area.

Presently under consideration are two new complementary programmes: a 60 credit specialization uniquely suited to the needs of Québécoise students and a 30 credit certificate designed for those who wish to take only a few courses in Women's Studies rather than a general degree. We need your feed-back on these new programmes—please write Dr. Christine Allen, Co-ordinator, Women's Studies, Simone de Beauvoir Institute, 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W., H3G 1M8.

Maureen Durley

Le Programme d'Études féminines de Concordia se transforme constamment pour s'adapter aux besoins des étudiants. Son organisation pédagogique est séparée de l'Institut Simone-de-Beauvoir et se trouve au Centre d'Études interdisciplinaires. On y offre une grande variété de cours interdisciplinaires, dépassant ainsi les limites départementales.

Les Études féminines forment un ensemble intégré et portent sur la recherche de l'identité féminine, sur l'histoire et les

changements contemporains, où à peu près toutes les disciplines de la Faculté des Arts et des Sciences sont mises à contribution. En particulier, le Programme offre un cours d'initiation en première année, et un cours de synthèse en dernière année. Actuellement, une centaine d'étudiants sont inscrits au cours d'initiation. On y compte des jeunes aussi bien que des personnes d'âge mûr: artistes, économistes, hommes, femmes, francophones, anglophones venus de tous les coins de la ville et même de l'extérieur. Présentement, une quarantaine d'étudiants sont inscrits au Programme et suivent des cours en lettres, en sciences ou en sciences sociales.

En 1979-80, Le Programme va s'étendre. Le Sénat de l'Université vient d'approuver une "majeure" de 36 crédits (6 cours annuels). Cette majeure offre une formation académique et professionnelle axée sur le rôle de la femme dans la société: choix excellent pour l'étudiant qui songe à poursuivre études et recherches dans ce domaine. Trois étudiants sur les cinq déjà inscrits à ce programme termineront leurs études en 1979. Nous prévoyons enfin deux nouveaux enseignements additionnels: une spécialisation de 60 crédits répondant particulièrement aux besoins des étudiants québécois, et un certificat de 30 crédits pour ceux qui voudraient suivre quelques cours en Etudes féminines sans postuler un grade universitaire.

Si vous désirez obtenir des renseignements ou nous faire parvenir vos commentaires sur nos activités, prière de vous adresser à: Dr. Christine Allen, Co-ordinator, Women's Studies, l'Institut Simone-de-Beauvoir, 1455 blvd. de Maisonneuve O., Montréal, H3G 1M8.

Women's Studies: Summer, 1979

Au cours de l'été 1979, se tiendront deux sessions de cours en Etudes féminines; le soir, du 8 mai au 10 juillet, et le jour du 3 juillet au 10 août. Les cours du soir sont offerts à raison de trois heures par séance, deux fois par semaine; les cours du jour, à raison de deux heures par jour, cinq fois par semaine.

This summer there are two sessions in Women's Studies: the evening sessions which run from May 8 to July 3 and the Day Summer Session which begins July 5 and continues until August 10. The evening sessions are given 3 hours twice a week while the day sessions are 2 hours for 5 days a week.

Evening Summer Session

Sex Differentiated Behaviour in Corporate Structures (6 credits)
jointly offered by Applied Social Science and the Centre for Interdisciplinary

Studies, Women's Studies.
team taught by Pat Pfeifer and Dirk Woldring
Sir George Campus - May 8 - July 10
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 18:15-20:10

Woman's Identity and Image: Historic Attitudes (3 credits)

offered by Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies; Women's Studies
taught by Maureen Durley
Loyola Campus - May 8 - June 5
Tuesday, Thursday 19:00-22:00

Woman's Identity and Image: Contemporary Approaches (3 credits)

offered by the Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies; Woman's Studies
taught by Rose Tekel
Loyola Campus - June 12 - July 10
Tuesday, Thursday 19:00-22:00

Early Sex Role Socialization (3 credits)

offered by the Education department
taught by Georgie DeVries
Sir George Campus May 8 - June 5
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 18:15-20:10

Day Summer Session - 5 days a week

Psychology S383 - Sexual Differentiation (6 credits)

taught by Charlene Berger
Loyola Campus - July 3 - Aug 10
9:00-11:00

Sociology S458 - Sociology of Sex Roles (6 credits)

taught by Marylee Stephenson - visiting prof. from McMaster University
Sir George Campus - July 3 - Aug 10
12:00-14:00

French C351 - La Littérature Québécoise au Féminin (3 credits)

taught by Gabrielle Frémont
Loyola Campus - July 3 - July 20
11:15-13:15
Special Subject: Anne Herbert

As well as the above courses which can all be taken for credit, we are also planning a series of lectures and events around the topic Women and the Environment. We are planning to arrange for a week-end session, which will provide opportunity for nature study and in-depth discussion on the ways in which women relate to their environment. Also, we are planning to sponsor a series of discussions on women's role in the various environmental movements. These sessions will be open to the general public, as well as students and faculty of Concordia.

If anyone has any questions about the Women's Studies program, please feel free to call either Christine Allen at 879-8524, or Rose Tekel 482-0320, ext 517.

Research on Women: Concordia's Psychology Department

Le Département de Psychologie de l'Université Concordia poursuit activement des recherches dans le domaine de la sexualité. Une étudiante est en train d'examiner les façons dont un certain nombre de femmes, de personnalité diverse, expliquent leur succès scolaire; une autre étudie comment des enfants d'âge préscolaire se conforment aux stéréotypes sexuels sous l'influence d'adultes, d'autres enfants, ainsi que du milieu en général. Jane Stewart, entre autres, poursuit des recherches sur les facteurs hormonaux et nerveux qui influencent la détermination sexuelle et de comportement.

Perusing the 'Annual Report of the Research and Clinical Activities of the Department of Psychology', I discovered that at Concordia nine professors, seven of them women, are addressing themselves to sex-related issues in their research. Their work includes (a) the clinical study of human sexual behavior, (b) the psychological determinants and consequences of abortion, (c) studies on late and early divorce, (d) neural and hormonal mechanisms underlying behavior differences between the sexes, (e) sex roles in relation to perception of vocational success or failure, (f) the influence of family and school on the socialization and development of girls and boys, and (g) the development of sex roles and sex differences.

I was intrigued, and decided to try to find out more about how that age-old question of 'la difference' was really being tackled. Gail Crombie, a graduate student, told me of a study she had done of the attributions which college women use to explain their academic achievement. Earlier research by others had invariably shown that women tend to attribute their academic successes to luck or effort, while men typically attribute theirs to ability. Gail chose to look at an all-female sample, separated into groups of high and low achievers, further divided on the basis of whether they were androgenous or stereotypic in their sex-role interpretations. Four groups resulted, and it turned out that high-achieving women whose sex-role interpretations were androgenous attributed their academic success principally to ability — much like the typical male pattern.

Lisa Serbin has just come to Concordia this year. She is studying the different factors that affect the degree to which the behaviour of young children conforms to sex-role stereotypes. Working mainly with pre-schoolers, she is examining the role which sex plays in their social development. She is concerned to avoid the extreme positions which cite either environmental factors or structural factors as all-important, and thinks it is essential to explore the significance of the cognitive aspects of gender

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Some Notable Past Events

Feb. 6: Nancy White, political satirist with CBC Sunday Morning performed

Jan. 10: Marie Cardinal, French feminist author, discussed her work in a talk given at Sir George.

Jan. 10: Professor Ruth Cowan, a visiting professor from the States, spoke on *The Industrial Revolution in the Home*.

Jan. 17: Dr. Eva Lidman, psychologist, and Rose Burstein, social worker, spoke on *Female Sexuality*.

Jan. 29: Professor Dorothy Sirota of the McGill School of Social Work spoke on *Personhood*.

On-Going Activities

De-Mystifying Math for Women: an 8 week course that began February 1.

Get-togethers on: February 16 (Bishop Street), March 13 (Terrebonne), March 17 (Bishop), April 6 (Terrebonne), April 20 (Bishop).

Wen-Do: a self defense course for women.

Creative Writing Workshop with Greta Nemiroff et al.: Growing Up Female, a group that uses creative writing as a medium for recalling childhood memories...

Community Service Interest Group with Christine Allen et al.: a group to study volunteering in areas such as palliative care, alcoholism etc.

Dialogues in Depth (Bishop Street House):

February 14: *Romanticism: The Fateful Brew or the Feast of Life*. **March 14:** *The Distorting Mirror: Images of Women in Modern Literature*.

Dates to Remember

General Assembly on Tuesday, March 13, 3pm on the Loyola Campus.

Modes of Feminism on February 17: a day of workshops and reflection. The Special theme is *Women in Quebec: Where are we going?*. Day care will be available for children age 6 and over. A maximum of 125 participants can be accommodated. Registration must be done in person by February 14 at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute on either campus. It is free of charge and open to all members of the Concordia community.

Sandra Pike, a psychologist from York University will be here the week of February 19-23 to speak on *Androgyny*.

Edith Whitfield Seashore, President of the National Training Laboratories Institute will give an open lecture (free) on March 5, at 8pm in the Campus Centre Lounge on the Loyola Campus. The topic will be *Breaking Sex Role Stereotypes in Organizations*. On Tuesday, March 6 there will be an all day workshop (9:30-4:00) on the Loyola Campus. It will be an experiential workshop which will take an in-depth look at the various topics covered in the lecture. It is open to all members of the Concordia Community. There is a registration fee of \$1.00 for the workshop which will be limited to 60 people. To register call Silvia Carter (SGWC) at 879-8015.

Marc LaLonde will speak at Sir George on March 23 at 10:30am. Room to be decided.

Mary Daly will speak on *Gyn/Ecology, Spinning New Time/Space*, on March 29 at 8 pm in the Campus Centre Main Lounge on the Loyola Campus.

Events from Elsewhere

The Canadian Committee for Learning Opportunities for Women (CCLOW) is presently preparing a brief which will document the discriminatory impact on women of cutbacks in man-power training allowance and out-reach programmes. Recommendations based on the findings of this brief and the research of other

national organisations will be presented at a public meeting and press conference in Ottawa in April of this year. Anyone wanting to join in this effort can contact: in Montreal, Greta Nemiroff, 931-8731, ext. 420; in Toronto, Mary Corkery, 924-6607 or 622-9236 (eve.).

Research on Women in Quebec / La recherche sur les femmes au Québec. Interdisciplinary meeting, May 12th and 13th organised by the Interdisciplinary Group on the Condition of

Women of the University of Québec at Montréal. Information: Myriam Lapointe, 1187 rue Bleury, Local 5930, Montréal, Québec.

The McGill Committee for the Teaching and Research on Women is planning a public conference to be held at McGill University in the fall of 1979 on *The Redefinition of the Public and Private Spheres*. Papers are invited from interested persons. For more information contact Barbara Scales, 392-5952, Susan Gottheil, 392-5356, Barbara Heppner, 392-5039 or the McGill Women's Union.

St. Michael's College in Winooski, Vermont, is having a national conference on *Women and Society* on March 23-25, 1979.

Contact Rose Tekel at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute on the Loyola Campus for more information.

Simone de Beauvoir Institute

Bishop Street (SGWC) 879-8521

Terrebonne House (Loy) 482-0320 ext. 715

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learning. There is a stage in a child's development where sex roles become categories, but the rules are by no means absolute. In her research, Lisa Serbin will be trying to pin-point exactly what does affect the salience of gender. Recognizing the importance of individual differences in building cognitive structures, she will study closely the materials on which a child builds—very specific environmental factors, as well as peer and adult reactions. Sex-stereotyping can have real consequences for a child's development, both intellectually and socially; perhaps studies of how it works will contribute to greater sex-role flexibility.

The Psychology Department's graduate seminar on sexual behavior is being coordinated this year by Jane Stewart, whose own work is concentrated on the endocrine basis of sex differences. The special topic of this year's seminar, appropriately, is sexual differentiation from prenatal life on, with particular emphasis on neural and hormonal mechanisms. Jane Stewart herself is doing research on the vexed question of the influence of the 'male' hormone and androgen on sex determination and behaviour. Many psychologists have believed that environmental factors outweigh any effects initially caused by androgen. Others, of a more patriarchal bent, have latched onto hormonal factors as being decisive in the formation of an

'inevitable patriarchy'. Jane Stewart emphasizes that there is always an interaction between genetic and environmental factors, nature and nurture, the native abilities of an individual and the social context. Our attitudes and sex roles, she warns, are socially developed; hormonal factors must be seen as only minimally predisposing. But, with a characteristic twinkle, she adds that what is minimally predisposing is never negligible.

In the course of talking to the people in the psychology department I was told of a group that was formed two years ago: the Canadian Psychological Association Interest Group in Women. This group is apparently interested in all kinds of women's issues. Anyone wanting to learn about the group should contact the coordinator, Dr. Cannie Stark Adamec, at the Scott Laboratory of the Wellesley Hospital in Toronto.

Dana Hearne

Editorial cont'd from p.3

membres de l'Institut de se tenir au courant des événements. Pour cette raison, il aura quelquefois le caractère d'une conversation familiale. Nous espérons pouvoir présenter certains articles de façon régulière, soit une interview dans chaque numéro; des articles sur notre philosophie, sur les études et la culture des femmes; des comptes rendus sur les écrits et les recherches en cours concernant celles-ci. Nous publierons également un programme des manifestations qui se tiendront à l'Institut (et ailleurs si on nous le demande). Nous espérons que vous nous soumettrez des avis et de courts articles qui pourraient intéresser nos lecteurs. Nous prévoyons une vaste diffusion au Canada ainsi que dans d'autres pays. De nombreuses personnes parmi nos membres, ainsi que parmi ceux qui nous ont exprimé leur intérêt, sont francophones. Aussi publierons-nous les articles qui nous seront soumis, soit en français, soit en anglais et quelquefois la traduction de ceux-ci ou leur analyse dans l'autre langue.

Ce qui nous caractérise à l'Institut Simone de Beauvoir, c'est que nous partageons les nombreuses préoccupations, les problèmes et les réussites de toutes les femmes. Nous avons eu le privilège de pouvoir fonder l'Institut avec l'appui de l'université, mais notre avantage primordial réside dans l'hétérogénéité de nos membres. Que vous soyez membre ou non, nous espérons que ce bulletin saura vous transmettre l'énergie qui l'anime et vous faire connaître la diversité que vous pouvez y trouver. Dans l'attente de votre concours, qu'il vienne de l'Institut ou en dehors de celui-ci, nous ferons de notre mieux pour propager l'information et vous exprimer notre sentiment de partager avec vous une cause commune.

Trad. Liliane Pollak